

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 579

UD 032 431

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TITLE Los Angeles Unified School District's Response to Assembly Bills 922 and 2834: A Preliminary Report. Publication No. 651.
INSTITUTION Los Angeles Unified School District, CA. Research and Evaluation Branch.
PUB DATE 1997-06-00
NOTE 57p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; *Expulsion; *High Risk Students; Interviews; *Nontraditional Education; Out of School Youth; Program Implementation; *State Legislation; Student Placement
IDENTIFIERS California; *Los Angeles Unified School District CA

ABSTRACT

California Assembly Bill 922 was signed into law as an urgency measure in October 1995. It assigned responsibility for expelled students to counties and school districts. This report is the first of a series of evaluation reports that will be disseminated on programs implemented in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to satisfy the mandates of Assembly Bills 922 (AB 922) and 2834 (AB 2834) (not discussed in this document). It presents information obtained from interviews with 10 key LAUSD personnel who are knowledgeable about district conditions prior to AB 922 and who have been or are currently involved with the implementation of AB 922. This report was originally intended to summarize interview responses for immediate feedback to interviewees as they continue the process of program implementation. However, it has evolved into a document that may prove useful for a larger audience that wants a context for understanding the initial phases of AB 922 programs. Interviewees considered the AB 922 programs highly beneficial because they provide educational and rehabilitative services to a group of at-risk students. The following six elements were emphasized as primary benefits resulting from the implementation of AB 922 programs: (1) establishment of AB 922 counselors; (2) an increase in services to parents; (3) improvements in classroom instruction; (4) the creation of student accountability; (5) a reduction in the time in which students are out of school during the expulsion process; and (6) improvements in students' grades and self-esteem. Interviewees also identified problems with the implementation of AB 922. The primary problems were related to difficulties in finding placements for expelled students, aspects of the district's zero tolerance policies, the lack of technology and resources, and principal cooperation with the referral process. Interviewees proposed suggestions for enhancing the positive aspects of the AB 922 programs and solving problems encountered in implementation. The report concludes with a summary of plans for the future evaluation of AB 922 programs. (Contains two figures.) (SLD)

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S RESPONSE TO ASSEMBLY BILLS 922 AND 2834: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

Publication No. 651

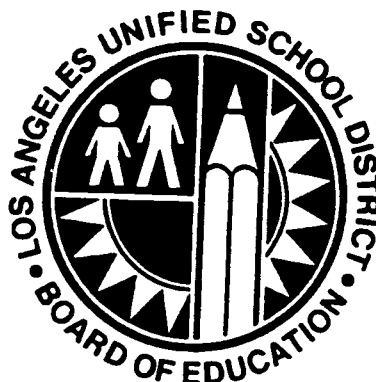
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to each of the individuals who were instrumental in the production of this report by giving their time during interviews and data gathering. We extend a special thank you to Sara A. Coughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Student Health and Human Services, Hector Madrigal, the Director of Pupil Services, and their staff for their editorial comments during the production of this report. We also extend our appreciation to our colleagues and the staff who assisted in editing, typing, and the production of this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - PRELIMINARY REPORT ON ASSEMBLY BILL 922

Assembly Bill 922 was signed into law as an urgency measure on October 16, 1995. As new legislation, it assigned responsibility for expelled students to counties and school districts. This report is the first in a series of evaluation reports that will be disseminated on programs implemented in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to satisfy the mandates of Assembly Bills 922 (AB 922) and 2834 (AB 2834). It presents information obtained from interviews with key LAUSD personnel who are knowledgeable about district conditions prior to AB 922, and who have been or are currently involved with the implementation of AB 922 programs.¹

This report was originally intended to summarize interview responses for immediate feedback to the interviewees to help guide them as they continue the process of program implementation. However, it has evolved into a document that may prove useful for a larger audience of individuals who want a context for understanding the initial phases of AB 922 programs.

Interviewees considered the AB 922 programs highly beneficial because they provide educational and rehabilitative services to a group of at-risk students. The following six elements were emphasized as primary benefits resulting from the implementation of AB 922 programs:

¹ Data was obtained through interviews conducted with representatives from the Options Office, the Student Discipline Office (including an AB 922 counselor), Middle School Programs, and the Government Relations and Legislation Office, all of whom were experienced with and

(1) the establishment of AB 922 counselors, (2) an increase in services to parents, (3) improvements in classroom instruction, (4) the creation of student accountability, (5) a reduction in the time in which students are out of school during the expulsion process, and (6) improvements in students' grades and self-esteem.

However, interviewees also identified problems with the implementation of AB 922 programs. The primary problems identified were related to: (1) difficulties in finding placements for expelled students, (2) aspects of the district's zero tolerance policy, (3) the time taken to place expelled students, (4) the lack of computer technology, (5) principal cooperation with the pupil referral process, and (6) the counselors and student placement sites.

Interviewees both proposed suggestions for enhancing the positive aspects of the AB 922 programs and solving problems encountered during the implementation of AB 922 legislation. The report concludes with a summary of the plans for the future evaluation of AB 922 programs.

knowledgeable about expulsions and the expulsion process.

THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSE TO ASSEMBLY BILLS 922 AND 2834: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

Background

This report is the first in a series of evaluation reports that will be disseminated on programs implemented in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to satisfy the mandates of Assembly Bills 922 (AB 922) and 2834 (AB 2834). The information in this report was obtained by the evaluator during interviews with administrators, and personnel referred by those administrators, who have worked with the implementation of AB 922 programs. Interviews were conducted with representatives of the Options Office, the Student Discipline Office (including an AB 922 counselor), Middle School Programs, and the Government Relations and Legislation Office. All interviewees were experienced with and knowledgeable about expulsions and the expulsion process. The purpose of the interviews was to determine administrators' opinions regarding the early implementation of AB 922 programs and their expectations for the evaluation of those programs.

This report was written for the following purposes:

- To use interview data to inform interviewees and other stakeholders of expectations held by those responsible for the early phases of AB 922 programs.
- To communicate basic facts about the AB 922 legislation and its intent.
- To present a summary of what the LAUSD administration would like to learn from an evaluation of AB 922 programs and the evaluator's plans to address these requests.

As the report was being written, changes occurred within LAUSD policy that directly effected AB 922 programs. These have been incorporated into this report so that readers can more thoroughly understand the development of AB 922 programs.

The Intent of AB 922

The primary intention of AB 922 according to its author, Senator Barbara Friedman, was “to require districts to take responsibility for the placement of all expelled students” (California Committee Analysis, April 5, 1995). AB 922 accomplished this by mandating that districts recommend expelled students to an appropriate academic placement with an individualized rehabilitation program. Prior to AB 922, no one was required to ensure either the continued education or supervision of an expelled pupil (California Committee Analysis, July 12, 1995). Students and their families were responsible for finding an educational program during a student’s expulsion period. They also had the responsibility of applying to a school district for readmittance at the end of their assigned expulsion periods.

Since the passage of AB 922 into law, a district has two options when expelling a student, depending on the student’s offense: the board of education may either give a student a “straight expulsion” or expel a student and then suspend the enforcement.

Straight Expulsions

The LAUSD policies regarding expelled students are slightly more strict than those of the state. The state Education Code (E.C.) mandates that principals immediately suspend a student and recommend him/her for an expulsion when any of the following offenses occur at school or at an off-campus school activity.

- Possessing, selling, or furnishing a firearm. This subdivision does not apply to an act of possessing a firearm if the pupil has obtained prior written permission to possess the firearm from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal. This subdivision applies to an act of possessing a firearm only if the possession is verified by an employee of a school district (E.C. 48915 (c-1)).
- Brandishing a knife at another person (E.C. 48915 (c-2)).
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code (E.C. 48915 (c-3)).
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or committing a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 (E.C. 48915 (c-4)).

Whereas state law says that a student receiving a straight expulsion (expulsion without suspended enforcement) may be placed in one of three different educational programs: a county community school program, a juvenile court school, or a new district-operated “community day school”(E.C. Section 48916.1(b)), LAUSD policy requires that a student given a straight expulsion be recommended to an educational program outside of the school district.²

²The LAUSD Board of Education voted to make an exception for elementary school students at its June 2, 1997, Board meeting. This decision will be addressed later in this report.

The LAUSD Zero Tolerance Policy also requires that a student be recommended for a straight expulsion for the following offenses beyond those in E.C. 48915 (c): possession of a replica or other gun including, but not limited to, those in E.C. 48915 (c), and, if the offender is over 16 years old, assaulting another person with a weapon in a manner likely to cause serious bodily injury, and battering another person in a way that causes bodily injury.

Expulsion with Suspended Enforcement

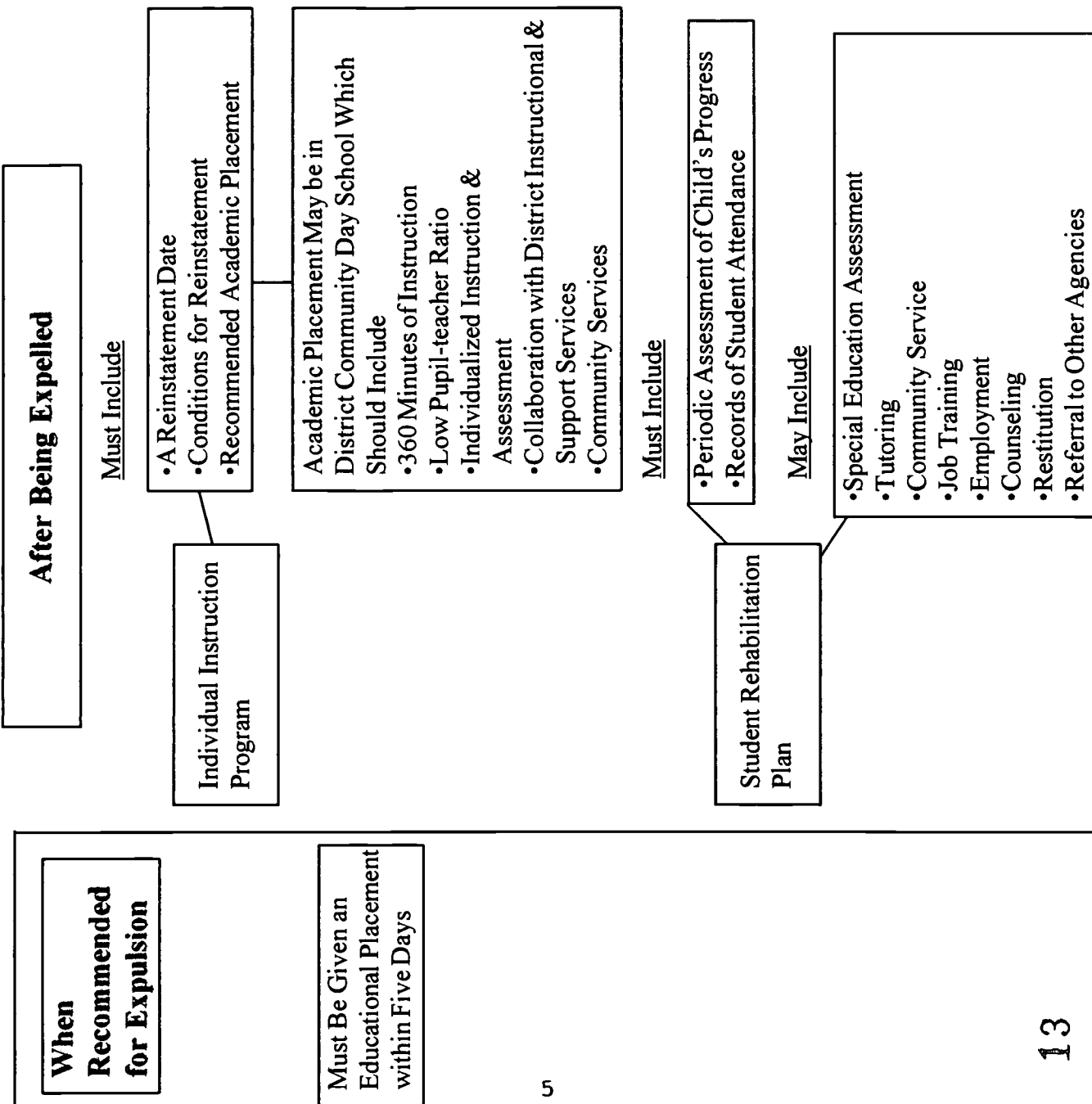
When the LAUSD Board of Education decides to expel a student, but to suspend the enforcement of the expulsion, LAUSD must comply with the education code by placing students in an appropriate district education program. During the first few months after the passage of AB 922, these students were typically placed in a Community Center Classroom Program (Tri-C). However, in the future, students expelled with suspended enforcement will usually be placed in community day schools. The CDSs were officially established on March 31, 1997.

For All Expelled Students

AB 922 does not only mandate that districts place expelled students in an educational program, but it also requires school districts to assess student progress and attendance and establish criteria for their readmittance. Furthermore, AB 922 mandates that school districts work with their respective counties to maintain outcome data on expelled students and to develop a joint plan for providing services to these students.³ Please see Figure 1 for a diagram of the key components of AB 922.

³Some of this wording is taken from Legislative Analysis Office website:
LAO Analysis of the 1995-1996 Budget Bill, K-12 Education (Online). (1997).
Available: <http://www.lao.ca.gov/a96e1.html#A28>. Pages 22-28.

Figure 1: Key Components of AB 922 and AB 2834



Community Day Schools

AB 922 recommends that school districts open community day schools (CDSs) to provide placements for expelled students. The state will provide funding for these schools because they are part of a mandated program. However, to receive funding, Community Day Schools must provide students with a daily minimum of 360 minutes of classroom instruction supervised by a certificated employee. CDSs must also be located away from a regular school site unless certain provisions of the law are met (AB 2834(1))⁴. Once districts establish CDSs, they receive an additional \$1,500 per student each year for those who received instruction for six-hours a day (capped at 0.5% of district enrollment).

AB 922 recommends that districts operating Community Day Schools include the following program components (Education Code; Section 48660.1):

- Cooperation with the county office of education, law enforcement, probation, and human services agencies personnel who work with at-risk youth.
- Low pupil-teacher ratio.
- Individualized instruction and assessment.
- Maximum collaboration with school district support service resources including, but not limited to, school counselors and psychologists, academic counselors, and pupil discipline personnel.

⁴The legislation in AB 2834(1) regarding the appropriate placements for CDSs amends legislation put forth in AB 922.

LAUSD had already incorporated several of the above features into programs for at-risk students prior to AB 922. For example, the LAUSD has a history of collaboration with other agencies, although on an informal and unregulated basis.

LAUSD's Transition to AB 922 Programs

In addition to the previously delineated mandates and recommendations of AB 922, the bill also mandates cooperation between school districts and the county. AB 922 requires that the county work with each school district within its boundaries to submit a plan to the state regarding how expelled students will be provided educational services. In response to this mandate, the LAUSD and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) have developed and formalized their relationship. An official collaborative plan entitled "A Memo of Understanding" was approved May 19, 1997. (See Appendix 1).

After the passage of AB 922, the Options Department of LAUSD began to coordinate efforts to convert the Tri-Cs into community day schools. The Tri-Cs are said to have maintained a low teacher-student ratio historically, in order to provide students with individualized instructional opportunities. Thus, the ratio of teachers to students at the Tri-Cs was consistent with state mandates for CDSs and did not have to be altered to make the transformation. However, the transformation of the Tri-Cs to CDSs led to the extension of the school day from four to six hours and the hiring of AB 922 counselors to work specifically with students involved in the expulsion process. These counselors also work with the CDS teachers to provide personalized assessments of students' progress. Finally, AB 922 counselors work with students' probation officers to ensure that the rehabilitative efforts of the county probation office and LAUSD are mutually supportive.

Unfortunately, LAUSD has only recently been qualified to obtain state funds to support the CDSs due to delays obtaining a board vote to approve the official transformation of Tri-Cs to CDSs. This vote was obtained on March 31, 1997.

Method

To obtain an understanding of how the passage of this bill is impacting LAUSD, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key administrators, and personnel referred by those administrators, who were involved with the implementation of AB 922. Interviewees included ten representatives from the Options Office, the Student Discipline Office (including an AB 922 counselor), Middle School Programs, and the Government Relations and Legislation Office, all of whom had extensive knowledge of the expulsion process.

Interviewees were asked questions regarding the following key topic areas:

- strengths and weaknesses of program changes implemented in response to the passage of AB 922
- recommendations on how to enhance perceived strengths and overcome perceived weaknesses
- priorities on the evaluation of the district programs implemented in response to AB 922.

Interviewees' responses on each question were reviewed and summarized. The results of this process are presented in the following sections of this report.

Perceived Strengths of AB 922 Programs

Interviewees identified the following as strengths resulting from the implementation of AB 922:

- ***Fewer students “falling through the cracks”***

Before AB 922 was passed into law, a school district had negligible legal responsibility to a student expelled from one of its schools. AB 922 gave schools and counties a responsibility to students during all phases of the expulsion process. One of the ways in which LAUSD complied with state mandates is by hiring the AB 922 counselors. Counselors make contracts with expelled students that set the criteria for their reinstatement and then monitor and track students' progress throughout the expulsion period. This is believed to result in more expelled students staying in educational programs.

- ***The establishment of the AB 922 counselors***

The AB 922 counselors were considered important for a variety of reasons, including student monitoring, as mentioned above. AB 922 counselors establish the initial contacts with the family of an expelled student and conduct an assessment of the child's home environment and personal well-being. The counselors then set up a contract with the student and his/ her family which defines the terms for reinstatement, monitor the fulfillment of the contract, and check in with the child's parents as frequently as their schedules permit. A counselor will usually be able to make contact with a student once every two or three weeks. When meeting with students, counselors also assess their needs for other services, such as medical care, dental care, food, etc. Counselors will

refer children to any services believed necessary. After monitoring a student for one semester to a year, a counselor may recommend reinstatement.

- ***An increase in parent services***

The AB 922 program has established procedures for referring parents to appropriate community and school services based upon the understanding that by improving the student's home environment, opportunities for academic improvement and behavioral rehabilitation are enhanced. Examples of services recommended to parents are parenting classes, psychological counseling, and GED preparation courses at the school sites.

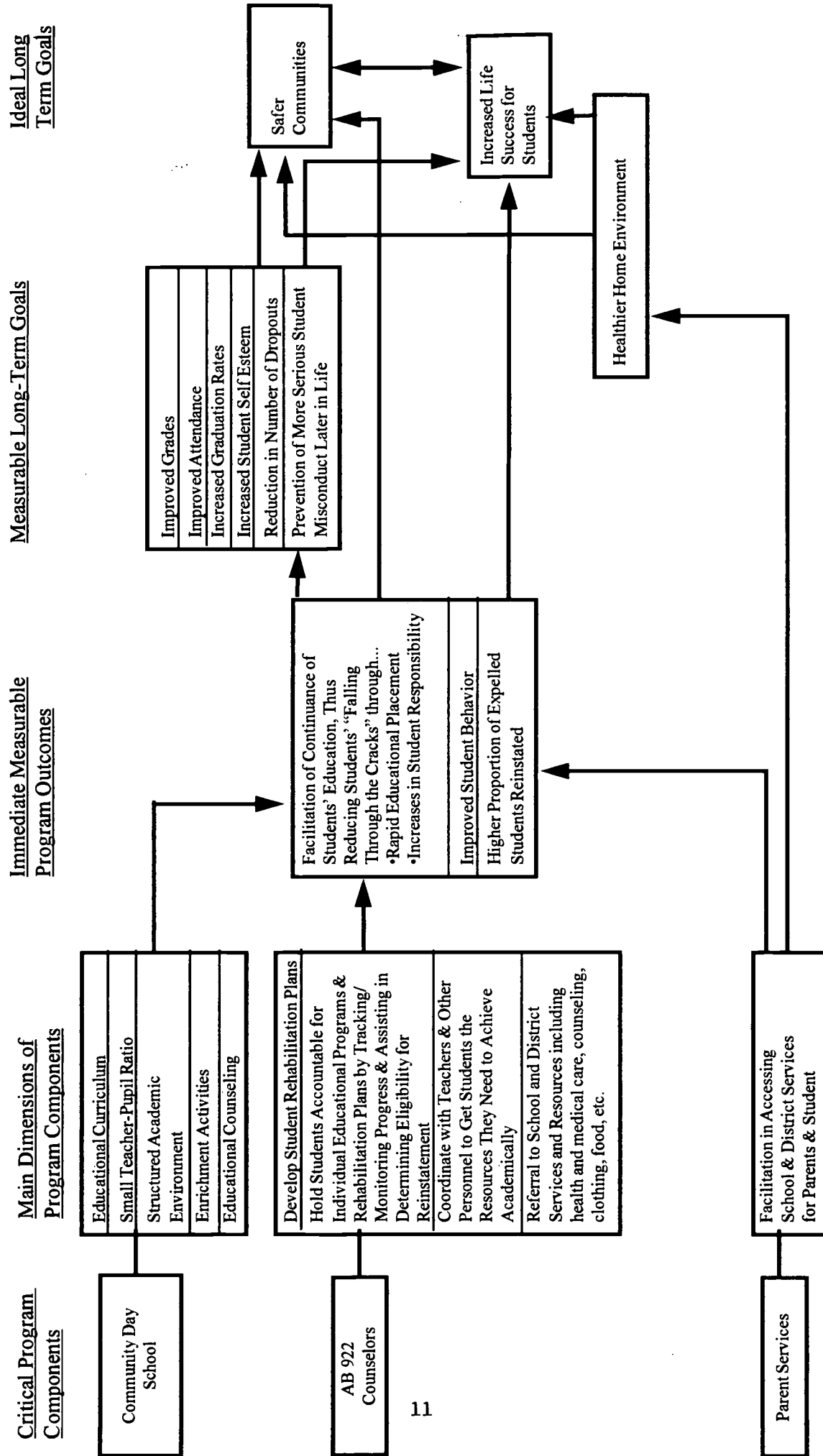
- ***The establishment of student rehabilitation processes***

It is hoped that the rehabilitation process will lead to improvements in students' behavior, an increased number of student reinstatements, improvements in students' attendance and academic achievement, a reduction in dropout rates, an increase in graduation rates, improvements in students' self-esteem, a safer community and, ultimately, increased student life success. Please see Figure 2 for a model of expected program outcomes.

- ***Improvements in classroom instruction***

Before the AB 922 counselors were hired, Tri-C teachers assumed many responsibilities that were auxiliary to actual classroom teaching. For example, they might have tried to find medical care for a child. The AB 922 counselors have assumed many of those responsibilities, leaving the Tri-C/CDS teachers more time to focus on teaching. Also, with the implementation of the six-hour day, the teachers have an additional two hours of

Figure 2: Program Model for AB 922 and AB 2834 as Perceived by Interviewed LAUSD Stakeholders



classroom time every day. This allows them to incorporate more into their school days, thus providing students with a richer instructional curriculum.

- ***The establishment of student accountability***

In order to be reinstated, students have to fulfill the terms of the contract between the student, parent, and AB 922 counselor. If the student does not do what s/he agreed to do, the student will not be reinstated. Students are, therefore, made accountable for their own rehabilitation and eventual reinstatement.

- ***Less time for expelled students to be out of school***

Before AB 922, expelled students and their families were responsible for locating an educational placement. There was the possibility that students would not go to school for the duration of their expulsion. Since AB 922, there is a stated maximum length of time during which a student may be out of school before receiving an alternative educational placement from the Student Discipline Office.

- ***Students' grades and self-esteem are improving***

The counselors believe that students' grades are improving while they are in their alternative placements. They feel that the improved grades are having positive effects on students' self-esteem.

- ***A more meaningful reinstatement process***

The reinstatement process used to be a "rubber stamp paper process". Now, students are reinstated by a committee where at least one person, the AB 922 counselor, knows the student. Not only can counselors realistically assess whether a student adequately

satisfied the terms of his/her contract, but they can also make sure that reinstated students are placed in an appropriate educational location.

Enhancing These Strengths

Interviewees felt that the AB 922 counselors were a positive addition to the expulsion programs. However, they agreed that the counseling component of the AB 922 programs could be further enhanced. They commented that the counselors felt as if they were living out of their cars and suggested that counselors be provided with an office space to use as a home base from which they could make confidential phone calls and meet with students and parents. It was also recommended that more counselors be hired so that each counselor could have a smaller case load and spend more time with each child. In addition, a need was expressed for counselors to have training in working with expelled students and in case management.

Although the AB 922 counselors were hired based upon the same criteria, interviewees felt that they represented different levels of expertise. This may have been because these counselors came from diverse counseling backgrounds. Working with populations of expelled students is very different from many other possible counseling experiences. In order to ensure that AB 922 counselors have the appropriate skills for AB 922 programs, it is recommended that current counselors and future new hires receive intensive in-service training on issues surrounding expelled students as well as on case management skills. Initial in-service training should be followed by ongoing professional development.

Additional recommendations for certain program components were:

- ***more financial resources.*** Interviewees generally indicated a need for funding with which to hire additional AB 922 counselors and other support staff. Hiring more people

would allow counselors to have a reduced caseload, leading to more individualized attention for AB 922 students. Interviewees also wanted financial assistance to help defray the costs of building or renting establishments for additional community day schools so as to be able to place students more effectively and in a more timely manner.

- **more staff.** Interviewees spoke of plans to hire a nurse, a special education specialist, and a psychologist which had not been implemented. (Since the interviews, a nurse and a special education specialist have been hired; a psychologist has not yet been hired.)

Perceived Deficiencies of Program Changes

There are several issues on which interviewees agreed that problems existed.

Interviewees proposed solutions, some of which have been enacted since the interviews, for almost every grievance expressed. The next section will list each complaint or problem followed by the interviewees' ideas regarding how to resolve the stated situation.

- ***Problem: Finding alternative educational placements for elementary students.***

There is only one alternative school (Hyde Park) that serves elementary school students.

It has been very difficult to place elementary school students since Los Angeles County does not have facilities to serve them. This problem is exacerbated by the state's

classification of sixth graders as elementary school students (Under AB 922 there are only two grade level classifications: elementary (Grades K-6) and secondary (Grades 7-12)).

Solution: More sites for Elementary School CDSs

On March 31, 1997, the LAUSD Board of Education approved funding that will allow the existing elementary school CDS to expand to three new sites. Thus, there will be four

elementary CDS sites in locations around the district. While some students may still have difficulty reaching a site, this will undoubtedly ease the problem.

Proposed Additional Solution: Obtain permission to reclassify sixth graders

Many remaining placement problems could be avoided if sixth graders were reclassified as middle school students or appropriated to the state's seventh through twelfth grade AB-922 category, since most of the "elementary school" expelled students are sixth graders who were assigned to middle schools prior to their expulsions. Either of these redesignation possibilities would allow more placement options for sixth grade students by permitting them to attend regular, non-elementary level CDSs. It is already a standard LAUSD policy to classify sixth graders as middle school students. In the LAUSD, students from Kindergarten through fifth grade are considered elementary school students, sixth through eighth graders are considered junior high (or middle school) students, and ninth through twelfth graders are considered high school students.

On June 2, 1997, the LAUSD Board of Education approved a request to apply to the State Board of Education for a waiver which would permit the LAUSD to classify expelled sixth graders as middle school students. If the state does approve the waiver, LAUSD may want to consider the placement of sixth graders on a case by case basis. Some sixth graders may be more suited to an elementary school environment while others may be mature enough to attend schools with older students. Also included in this proposal and approved by the LAUSD's Board of Education was the option to place expelled elementary school students in district community day schools.

- ***Problem: District level zero tolerance policy***

The LAUSD has a zero tolerance policy that is more strict than that of the state. According to state law, when a student violates a zero tolerance policy, a student may still attend a district operated community day school. However, according to LAUSD policy, the student must be removed from the district. LAUSD also has a broader range of offenses for which it mandates student expulsions than those defined by the state. The result of LAUSD policy on AB 922 programs is that a greater number of students are expelled from the district who must be sent to a county day school instead of to a district-operated CDS than would be required under the law. By placing students in county schools instead of district-operated CDSs, LAUSD loses the funding it could receive for these students. It is also another example of a conflict over the placement of elementary school students.

Since Los Angeles County has not provided facilities for elementary school students and LAUSD policy has required all zero tolerance policy offenders to be placed outside of the district, LAUSD has been out of compliance with the law that requires that all students be able to attend school. In addition, interviewees believed that the district's zero tolerance policy has been too drastic for elementary school children who tend to be expelled for violations that they do not completely understand. Interviewees consistently expressed the belief that elementary students, and many other expelled students, are generally good students who make a single error in judgement. It is believed that many of these students should not be removed from LAUSD schools because forcing them to

transfer is a disservice to them and because they do not pose a threat to others if they remained in LAUSD schools.

Solution: Board vote.

The Board vote on June 2, 1997, resolved this problem by permitting all expelled elementary school students to be placed in district community day schools. This vote aligned the district's policy on expelled student placement with the state's mandate.

- ***Problem: Timeliness of student placements***

There have been difficulties placing some of the students within the five days allowed by state mandate.

Proposed Solution: Use of technology to more rapidly transfer information

Regular schools, community day schools, the Options Office and schools, and the Student Discipline Office should be connected to a computer database that will allow information to be easily transferred between locations and offices. This would decrease the delays in student placements that are caused by expelling schools who neglect to complete the paperwork needed by the Student Discipline Office. It would allow Student Discipline staff to access a central data file to get students' data directly instead of waiting for schools to respond to information requests. It would also decrease the delays caused by the paperwork shuffling process which occurs between the Student Discipline and Options Office, because the two offices could access information simultaneously. Procedures for installing such a computer system are being explored.

- ***Problem: Lack of computer technology.***

As discussed above, communication is hindered by lack of technology. Information is being passed between offices via Xeroxed and, possibly, faxed copies of documents that may have been hand-written. These copies are not always legible and they do not always get to the appropriate offices in a timely manner; they sometimes do not arrive at their destinations at all. In addition, since AB 922 counselors spend a large portion of their workday traveling to different locations, they have to carry all the information they need with them in their cars. Not only is this cumbersome, but also, if a car is stolen, confidential records could be lost. It is believed that this problem would be resolved if counselors had laptop computers on which they could store their data because these could be easily transferred between their cars and other locations. Therefore, interviewees again identified the lack of technology as a source of some of the counselors' problems.

Proposed Solution: Computer purchases and networking

Communication links could be strengthened and made more rapid, the referral process could become smoother and more timely, and the amount of paper passed and carried could be reduced through the development of a network system. It is suggested that every AB 922 counselor be provided with a laptop computer which contains templates of all the data forms that they need. These individual computers could then be linked to a main computer system to download or upload information for shared use. This would entail the installation of a network system. In addition, it was suggested that each of the Options Sites and the Options and Student Discipline Offices be outfitted with at least

the minimal technology required to input and retrieve data from the main system. The Student Discipline Office, the Options Office, and the Program Evaluation and Research Branch are working with the Information Technology Division to establish a network system which would allow the exchange of information.

- ***Problem: Principals are not always cooperative with the referral process.***

Principals tend to resist having expelled students placed on their campuses. Also, elementary school principals who recommend students for expulsion are being asked to find placements in other elementary schools for their expelled students. Principals consider this to be an inappropriate request to be made of them.

Proposed Solution: Letter to principals.

Interviewees suggested that a letter be sent to principals encouraging their cooperation.

However, a more assertive alternative plan may need to be developed.

The following criticisms and complaints were voiced less frequently:

Problems Regarding the AB 922 Counselors and the Placement Sites

There have been several problems identified regarding the counselors and their relationship with the students' placement sites, specified as follows:

- ***Problem #1: AB 922 Counselors are spending too much of their time traveling.***

Counselors are spending an inordinate amount of time traveling from one school site or student residence to another, thus reducing the time that can be devoted to individual students.

Proposed Solution #1: More counselors.

Hiring more counselors would allow the LAUSD to be divided into smaller service areas, thus providing counselors with more time for each student. Alternately, the counselors' service areas could be redefined. However, previous attempts to redefine service areas have been unsuccessful.

- ***Problem #2: Confusion regarding which counselors are working with which students.***

Because of multiple assignments to schools, teachers and principals are not sure which counselors are working with their students. Originally, it was planned that one counselor would be assigned to each Tri-C/CDS site. However, because the students at each Tri-C/CDS site come from such disperse locations, it is difficult for a counselor to make house calls to all of these students. Therefore, counselors have been assigned to students based on their residence areas.

Proposed Solution #2: Information on assigning counselors to students and/or service areas

It would be helpful to have a list to which teachers and principals could refer to in order to find out which counselors are assigned to students at their respective schools.

- ***Problem #3: Difficulty building relationships.***

There have also been problems creating positive and productive relationships between the counselors and the teachers and principals. This could be partly due to a lack of understanding of the AB 922 counselors' roles and responsibilities. Initially, teachers and principals did not know who the counselors were. Since that time, there have been occasions where teachers have felt that counselors were acting inappropriately by

coming into their classrooms and wanting to talk to them or their students during the school day. Teachers are purported to fear that having a counselor talk to either them or one of their students in the classroom may violate students' confidentiality rights.

However, if a counselor confers with a teacher outside of the classroom, the class is left unattended. If a counselor confers with a student outside of the classroom, s/he may miss a critical part of a lesson. Similarly, counselors have perceived the teachers as unhelpful as the counselors try to serve their students.

Proposed Solution #3: Establish protocols for counselors' site visits.

Teacher and counselor representatives could develop a protocol for use when counselors are required to meet with students during the school day. While counselors need to be able to meet with teachers and their assigned students, they also need to understand the restrictions of the AB 922 single teacher school sites.

Problems for Which No Solutions Were Proposed

- ***AB 922 did not make provisions for start-up costs.***

Since community day schools usually cannot be on the same site as another campus, it is difficult and expensive to open new CDS sites.

- ***The focus of AB 922 Reforms has been primarily on expelled high school students.***

It was thought that there should be more of a focus on preventative measures as part of AB 922 programs. Even if preventative programs are not established, it was felt that more effort should be spent on enhancing programs for elementary and middle school children than is being expended at the current time.

What Stakeholders Want to Learn from the Program Evaluation

The last part of the interview questioned interviewees' about their primary interests in the evaluation of AB 922. Interviewees indicated that they would like to have access to the following information:

- Program success as measured by the number of students who return to regular school programs rather than to alternative programs or dropping out after being expelled
- Recidivism rates of expelled students
- Changes in students' grades after being placed in an alternative education program

While the above were expressed by at least 1/3 of the interviewees, at least one interviewee expressed interest in having the following questions answered:

- What is the breakdown of basic expulsion data by year in school, students' ethnicity, socio-economic status, and academic level?
- How many students graduate and how does this vary based on the reason expelled?
- What is the second crime of recidivists?
- What happens to students who are incarcerated?
- What happens to expelled students who spend their year in private schools?
- What happens to students after they are reinstated?
- What does a typical community day school look like?
- Is there a difference between the types of crimes males and females are committing?
- Are students with Limited-English Proficiency (LEP), who are taking English as a Second Language (ESL), and regular students receiving the same treatment?
- Where are we in the AB 922 implementation process?

- Are youngsters getting the types of services they need?
- How accurate and timely is the communication among the offices involved in the expulsion process?

Plans to Respond to Evaluation Interests

The Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) is responsible for both mandated and non-mandated evaluation of AB 922 programs. Part I of the evaluation is designed to fulfill state mandated program evaluation requirements. Part I also includes comparisons of pre- and post- AB 922 data based primarily on the variables required by the state. Part II of the evaluation will provide LAUSD with information necessary to answer stakeholder questions not answered in Part I, and to determine whether, and to what extent, AB 922 programs are effective. PERB is working with the Student Discipline Office, the Options Office, and ITD to establish mechanisms to collect the data required to provide the requested information.

Part I of the Evaluation

The first evaluation priority is to comply with state mandated evaluation requirements so that LAUSD can continue to receive funds from AB 922 programs. The state mandates the collection and recording of the following six data components each year (Education Code, Section 48916.1(e)(1)):

- The number of students recommended for expulsion.
- The grounds for each recommended expulsion.
- Whether the pupils were subsequently expelled.
- Whether the expulsion orders were suspended.
- The type of referrals made after the expulsion.

- The disposition of pupils after the end of the expulsion period.

Although AB 922 stated that the State Department of Education would provide necessary data forms to school districts to be returned to them by June 1 of this year, as yet no such forms have become available. However, PERB has constructed data templates (data forms) and submitted them to the state for their approval. On June 7, 1997, a state representative made a written request that the LAUSD grant permission to the state to use these templates for the 1996-1997 program year. A copy of these templates is included in Appendix 2.

The data to satisfy most of the mandated requirements are being collected. PERB has been working with Pupil Discipline Services and the Information Technology Division to ensure that systems are established to collect the remaining data.

Data from the two years immediately prior to the implementation of AB 922 (1994-1995; 1995-1996) will be analyzed and compared with data collected after the implementation of AB 922 programs to measure program effectiveness. Comparisons will be made on each of the six data elements required by the state (please see pages 24-25 for the bulleted list), with the possible exception of the disposition of pupils after the expulsion period. Comparisons will also be made on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and school level (elementary school, middle school, high school, etc.). ITD, the Student Discipline Office, and PERB, are coordinating efforts to obtain information on the disposition of students after reinstatement. ITD and PERB are also working together to develop the ability to compare other information such as the special education status of students, student retention rates, and student drop out rates for pre and post AB 922 programs.

Part II of the Evaluation

A variety of strategies will be undertaken to respond to the questions of LAUSD stakeholders. PERB is already working with ITD and the Student Discipline Office to establish mechanisms for tracking students in order to obtain information such as recidivism rates and student success rates. PERB will also be conducting a combination of interviews, focus groups, and surveys with counselors, teachers, parents, and students to find out how they are affected by AB 922 programs. Also of interest will be future interviewees' and focus group participants' perceptions of program effectiveness and their beliefs regarding how to make programs more effective, much as administrators' opinions were portrayed in the present report. Additional information will also be requested from AB 922 administrators as necessary. During these processes, particular attention will be given to obtaining and reporting information on the special populations within the broader population of expelled students, such as LEP, ESL, special education, and probation students.

Finally, in order to answer psychosocial questions regarding the effectiveness of AB 922 programs, PERB is conducting a pilot study utilizing the information in student files. Based on the compilation of individual student data, PERB plans to:

- construct a profile of the typical expelled student. This will include a description of the emotional, mental, educational, and physical needs of students.
- determine how identified student needs are addressed in students' educational and rehabilitation plans.
- report what services are actually received by students and who is providing those services.

- describe the effects of services received on student outcomes such as behavior, attendance, and achievement.

Conclusion

This report offered preliminary information regarding the current status of AB 922 programs. It is based on data obtained from a small group of LAUSD stakeholders who have had a high level of involvement with AB 922 programs. This report is intended to provide interested LAUSD stakeholders, including those interviewed, with feedback regarding the current status of AB 922 programs and mechanisms through which the programs can be improved. It is also intended to provide stakeholders with information regarding the role of the Program Evaluation and Research Branch during the implementation of AB 922. Please direct questions or comments to Lynette Probst, AB 922 evaluator, at the PERB office: 310-215-9392.

Appendix 1

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BY AND BETWEEN

**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAUSD)
LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (LACOE)**

**LAUSD/LACOE COLLABORATIVE PLAN FOR SERVING EXPELLED STUDENTS
FOR PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO ALL EXPELLED
PUPILS FROM THE LAUSD IN COMPLIANCE WITH AB 922,
CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTION 48926**

April 25, 1997

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAUSD)/ LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (LACOE) COLLABORATIVE PLAN FOR SERVING EXPELLED STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

AB 922 requires districts and counties to develop a plan for the educational placement and rehabilitation of all expelled students. EC 48926 specifically requires a plan to enumerate educational alternatives for expelled students, identify the gaps in these educational services, and find ways to fill those service gaps (cf. attached). Expelled students who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan in district Community Day Schools (CDSs) or other options settings, or who continue to pose a danger to other district pupils, will need to be placed in another alternative district or county setting.

Further, E.C. 48926 stipulates that the plans for educational services for expelled students be adopted by both district governing boards and by county Boards of Education. The county is required to provide the Superintendent of Public Instruction with the plan for providing services to all expelled students in the county by no later than June 30, 1997. Updates are then to be submitted on a "triennial" basis.

INTRODUCTION

This Memorandum of Understanding between LAUSD and LACOE delineates our plan for working collaboratively toward meeting the mandates of AB 922 pertaining to the educational placement of students expelled by the LAUSD. This plan identifies a process by which students expelled from the LAUSD will be offered an educational placement, through either LAUSD or LACOE. It also outlines the specific responsibilities of both LAUSD and LACOE, which we believe meet both the intent of the legislature and the new requirements established pursuant to the provisions of California Education Code sections 48916.1 and 48926. LAUSD and LACOE agree to participate in this collaborative as indicated below:

EXPULSIONS: REGULAR EDUCATION STUDENTS

Placements in LAUSD Programs (Suspended Enforcement Expulsions)

- 1.0 The LAUSD will be responsible for the following programmatic duties regarding students expelled by the LAUSD and placed in LAUSD educational programs:**
 - 1.1 Facilitate educational placements in an appropriate LAUSD educational program.
 - 1.2 Formulate specific rehabilitation plans for students in collaboration with teachers and support services personnel.
 - 1.3 Manage, coordinate, monitor, and track students and their educational and rehabilitation progress.
 - 1.4 Provide direct counseling services to students and their families.
 - 1.5 Maximize collaboration among LAUSD support services resources.
 - 1.6 Maximize collaboration between LAUSD support services personnel (AB 922 multidisciplinary team) and classroom teachers to ensure timely enrollment, regular attendance, and appropriate educational assessment and evaluation.
 - 1.7 Facilitate linkage between students and community services (e.g., counseling programs; gang, drugs, and alcohol rehabilitation programs; job training programs).
 - 1.8 Maximize collaboration and communication between LAUSD AB 922 multidisciplinary team and the juvenile justice system (e.g., probation, juvenile courts, law enforcement agencies).
 - 1.9 Maximize collaboration between LAUSD AB 922 multidisciplinary team and City or County programs (e.g., Department of Children and Family Services and City and District Attorneys).
 - 1.10 Coordinate, facilitate, and conduct expulsion reinstatement hearings, a process which includes reviewing students' rehabilitation and preparing recommendation reports for the LAUSD Board of Education.

Referrals to LACOE (Expulsions Without Suspended Enforcement)

- 2.0 The LAUSD will be responsible for the following programmatic duties regarding students expelled by the LAUSD and referred to LACOE:**
 - 2.1 Identify which expelled students will be referred to LACOE.
 - 2.2 Facilitate referrals to identified LACOE contact person.
 - 2.3 Provide all necessary documentation, including specified pupil records as required by LACOE.
 - 2.4 Incidate all special terms or conditions for reinstatement as specified in the pupil's rehabilitation plan. Include the date the pupil shall be reviewed for readmission as established by the governing board.
 - 2.5 Facilitate consultation with appropriate LAUSD staff who are familiar with the pertinent particulars of the student referred.

Placements in LACOE Programs

- 3.0 LACOE will be responsible for the following programmatic duties regarding the above-referenced category of students expelled by the LAUSD and referred to LACOE:**
 - 3.1 Review all required documentation submitted with referral to determine if pupil can be properly served in the County Alternative Program.
 - 3.2 If referral is deemed appropriate, LACOE staff will District developed rehabilitation plan and ensure timely placement in appropriate education program.
 - 3.3 Manage, coordinate, monitor and track students' educational and rehabilitation plan and progress.
 - 3.4 Maximize collaboration among staff of LACOE's educational programs to ensure timely enrollment of student.
 - 3.5 Coordinate and monitor pupil progress and provide district with "outcome data" as required by E.C. Section 48926.1(f).
 - 3.6 Maintain necessary progress reports related to pupil's rehabilitation.

- 3.7 Maintain all pupil records as required by law.
- 3.8 Notify District representative if it becomes apparent that pupil is not having a successful experience in the assigned LACOE program. Coordinate multidisciplinary review meeting (i.e., to include, but not limited to LACOE/LAUSD/LA County Probation Department) for the purpose of considering the disposition of the pupil's case.

EXPULSIONS: SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Referrals to LACOE

- 4.0 **The above-referenced procedures for regular education students shall apply equally to students previously identified as having special education needs. In addition, when special education students are expelled and referred to LACOE, the LAUSD contact person will:**
 - 4.1 Provide copies of the latest IEP, including the last psychological and language designation assessment and transition plans (students 16 +).
 - 4.2 Provide LACOE contact person with the name, address, and home and work phone numbers of the parent/guardian, for the purpose of parent notification and signing IEPs (EC 56321).
 - 4.3 Provide staff to attend exit IEPs for students.
 - 4.4 Reimburse LACOE for excess costs related to implementation of IEP.

Placements in LACOE Programs

- 5.0 **When LACOE receives a special education expulsion referral from the LAUSD, the LACOE contact person will:**
 - 5.1 Determine appropriate placement among LACOE settings.
 - 5.2 Make an administrative placement (30-day interim placement, EC 56325).
 - 5.3 Make a final recommendation prior to the expiration of the 30-day placement.
 - 5.4 Immediately notify the contact person of the LAUSD of any students who are inappropriately placed.

- 5.5 Facilitate the process of obtaining an Inter-Selpa permit for students whose least restrictive environment is a special day class.
- 5.6 Notify the LAUSD contact person of all new referrals for special education.
- 5.7 Schedule, attend, and arrange for appropriate staff to attend all exit IEPs in order to transition students back to the LAUSD.

OTHER STIPULATIONS:

- 6.0 **LAUSD and LACOE will collaborate to find housing facilities for those students in geographic areas where it is feasible to do so.**
- 6.1 LAUSD and LACOE agree to continue ongoing discussion regarding how best to address the needs of K-6 expulsions.
- 6.2 LACOE will provide LAUSD with outcome data as specified in 48916.1(f)(1)(A) on any expelled LAUSD student placed in a county school or independent study programs.

We, the undersigned, as authorized representatives of the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education, do hereby approve this collaborative plan for expelled students, to take effect upon joint signatures. We understand that this plan will be reviewed and, if necessary, renewed on an annual basis.

Sidney A. Thompson
Superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District

Date

Donald W. Ingwerson
Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools

Date

Appendix 2

Templates - State mandated expulsion data
to be in compliance with AB 922

Draft - Submitted for Approval

by Lynette Probst & Ebrahim Maddahian, PhD
Los Angeles Unified School District Program
Evaluation and Research Unit

Tables 1a, 1b, and 1c

Summary Data in Response to Section
489161.1(e)(1)(A)(C)(D)
by
Ethnicity and School Level

Table 1a

Total District Enrollment by Gender, Ethnicity, and School Level

Issue	Ethnicity	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Total District Enrollment by Ethnicity</u>	Native American						
	Asian						
	Black						
	Hispanic						
	White						
	Filipino						
	Pacific Islander						
	Total Students						
<u>Total District Enrollment by School Level</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Other						
	Total Students						

Table 1b (Answers requirements of Section 48916.1(e)(1)(A)(C)(D))

Recommended Expulsions and Actual Expulsions by Ethnicity

Issue	Ethnicity	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Recommended for Expulsions</u>	Native American						
	Asian						
	Black						
	Hispanic						
	White						
	Filipino						
	Pacific Islander						
	Total Students						
Note: The following sections are NOT additive to the above due to cases dismissed, etc.							
<u>Students Expelled with Suspended Enforcement</u>	Native American						
	Asian						
	Black						
	Hispanic						
	White						
	Filipino						
	Pacific Islander						
	Total Students						
<u>Students Expelled with- out Suspended Enforcement (Straight Expulsions)</u>	Native American						
	Asian						
	Black						
	Hispanic						
	White						
	Filipino						
	Pacific Islander						
	Total Students						

Table 1c (Data requirements for Section 489161.1 (e)(1)(A)(C)(D))

Recommended and Actual Expulsions by School Level

Issue	School Level	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Recommending Expulsion</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Other						
	Total Students						
<u>Expelled with Suspended Enforcement</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Other						
	Total Students						
<u>Students Expelled without Suspended Enforcement (Straight Expulsions)</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Other						
	Total Students						

Table 2

Summary Data in Response to Section
489161.1 (e)(1)(B)(D)

Table 2 (Answers requirements of Section 489161(e)(1)(B)(D)

Grounds for Recommended Expulsions and Actual Expulsions¹

Issue	Education Code Number	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Reason Recommended for Expulsion</u>	48915(c-1)						
	48915(c-2)						
	48915(c-3)						
	48915(c-4)						
	48915(a-1)						
	48915(a-2)						
	48915(a-3)						
	48915(a-4)						
	48915(a-5)						
	48900(a)						
	48900(d)						
	48900(f)						
	48900(g)						
	48900(h)						
	48900(i)						
	48900(j)						
	48900(k)						
	48900(l)						
	48900(m)						
	48900(o) & 48900.4						
	48900.2						
	48900.3						

¹ Not all of this information was available for the 1995-1996 school year. It will be available beginning the 1997-1998 academic year.

Table 2, Page 2 of 3 (Data requirements for section 489161(e)(1)(B)(D))

Issue	Education Code Number	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Students Expelled with Suspended Enforcement</u>	48915(c-1)						
	48915(c-2)						
	48915(c-3)						
	48915(c-4)						
	48915(a-1)						
	48915(a-2)						
	48915(a-3)						
	48915(a-4)						
	48915(a-5)						
	48900(a)						
	48900(d)						
	48900(f)						
	48900(g)						
	48900(h)						
	48900(i)						
	48900(j)						
	48900(k)						
	48900(l)						
	48900(m)						
	48900(o) & 48900.4						
	48900.2						
	48900.3						

Table 2, Page 3 of 3 (Data requirements for Section 489161(e)(1)(B)(D))

Issue	Education Code Number	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Students Expelled without Suspended Enforcement (Straight Expulsion)</u>	48915(c-1)						
	48915(c-2)						
	48915(c-3)						
	48915(c-4)						
	48915(a-1)						
	48915(a-2)						
	48915(a-3)						
	48915(a-4)						
	48915(a-5)						
	48900(a)						
	48900(d)						
	48900(f)						
	48900(g)						
	48900(h)						
	48900(i)						
	48900(j)						
	48900(k)						
	48900(l)						
	48900(m)						
	48900(o) & 48900.4						
	48900.2						
	48900.3						

Table 3

Summary Data in Response to Section
489161(e)(1)(E)

Table 3 (Data requirements for Section 489161(e)(1)(E))

The Type of Educational Placement Made After the Expulsion by Type of Expulsion

Type of Expulsion	Educational Placement Made After Expulsion	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Expulsion with Suspended Enforcement</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Continuation School						
	Opportunity School						
	Community Day School						
	Special Education						
	Other						
<u>Expulsion without Suspended Enforcement (Straight Expulsions)</u>	District Community Day School						
	County Program, Div. of Alt. Ed.						
	County Program, Div. of Court and Community Schools						
	Special Education Alternative Placements						
	Other						

Table 4

Summary Data in Response to Section
489161(e)(1)(F)

Table 4 (Data requirements for Section 489161(e)(1)(F))

Disposition of Pupil After Expulsion Period by Type of Expulsion

Type of Expulsion	Disposition of Pupil After Expulsion Period	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Expulsion with Suspended Enforcement</u>	Elementary School						
	Middle School						
	High School						
	Continuation School						
	Opportunity School						
	Community Day School						
	Other						
<u>Expulsion without Suspended Enforcement (Straight Expulsion)</u>	District Community Day School						
	County Program, Div. of Alt. Ed						
	County Program, Div. of Court & Community Schools						
	Special Education Alternative Placements						
	Other						



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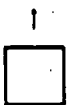
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